

# Reclaim Education

Notes on the global struggle

## "Spring of Resistance" - March - May 2011

### "Emancipation for All!"

Free and emancipatory education does not only benefit students in schools and universities, but also society at large. We, groups and activists around the world on the ISM platform, say "Our Fight is Your Fight just like Your Fight is Our Fight" and call upon labour and the community at large to join the fight students, teachers and parents are engaged in. Massive protests were organized in various parts of the world including Austria, Bangladesh, Chile, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, not to mention South Africa, the UK, Ukraine and the U.S.A. in the past few months alone (see e.g. "Global Wave of Action for Education"). The demonstrations were not only against austerity measures that effect accessibility to education, but also to fight the increasing privatization of education, growing pressure to succeed, and a rising wave of questioning of the fundamental structures and functions of education systems.

To further the pressure locally and globally, groups, associations and individuals on the International Student

Movement platform, who endorse the "International Joint Statement" came together to initiate the "Spring of Res-

The framework of the SoR basically consists of the following three elements:

\* "International Joint Statement" (consider endorsing it!):

[http://ism-global.net/international\\_joint\\_statement](http://ism-global.net/international_joint_statement)

\* a united symbol (basically different versions of the picture on this page)

\* common slogans (such as "One World - One Struggle" and "Free Emancipatory Education for All")

Individual groups and associations will organize their own actions during this period while the ISM provides the platform and the infrastructure to coordinate the mobilization across and between the regions.

The timeframe of the "Spring of Resistance" marks an opportunity to strengthen the network between groups and activists and unite worldwide for free emancipatory education. Various social movements can be joined by the timing as well as by the framework of the "Spring of Resistance".

In addition to sit-ins and demonstrations, events such as workshops and street theatre are planned by some to mark the resistance against the currently dominating education systems around the world. We want education for emancipation - not

istance" (SoR) from March to May 2011. That period will include a "Global Week of Action" (March 21-26<sup>th</sup>) as well as a "Global Day of Action" (May 2<sup>nd</sup>).



### About this newsletter

This newsletter is part of the communication infrastructure of the independent platform "International Student Movement" (ISM). The ISM is being used and shaped by education activists and groups around the world who are struggling against the increasing privatisation of public education and for free emancipatory education for all.

This newsletter is the result of voluntary work done by a few individuals who are passionate about the cause. The positions expressed are not in any way representative for any group or the "International Student Movement" as a whole.



For further details:

website: [www.ism-global.net](http://www.ism-global.net)

contact: [united.for.education@gmail.com](mailto:united.for.education@gmail.com)

twitter: @ISM030

for profits!

The SoR will kick off on March 1<sup>st</sup>, which marks the beginning of the Month of Action to Defend Public Education across the U.S.A.. During the same month groups in Canada, the UK and Germany already announced protests for free education as part of the SoR. Make sure to announce your

actions as well by sending a mail to [united.for.education@gmail.com](mailto:united.for.education@gmail.com), so that people worldwide will hear about them.

All details on the SoR: [http://ism-global.net/SoR\\_2011](http://ism-global.net/SoR_2011)

*When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes duty.*

# News Worldwide

For weeks and months, people at the University of **Puerto Rico** have been resisting the introduction of a new fee, (US\$800) and the heavy police presence on campus. On February 9<sup>th</sup>, riot police, some of whom on horses, attacked students with pepper spray and batons. Several people were injured and about 30 arrested. Only two weeks earlier, police shot at protesters with rubber bullets and tear gas canisters.

In protest against fees and cuts, students began to occupy spaces once again. The University of Glasgow (**Scotland, UK**) starting February 1<sup>st</sup>, and Hull University (**England, UK**) since February 8<sup>th</sup>. Now University of West England too (**England, UK**) February 9<sup>th</sup>.

In Kasiyabath (**India**), on February 7<sup>th</sup>, hundreds, if not thousands of students and parents protested university management for shaving students' heads as punishment for not paying

their fees on time.

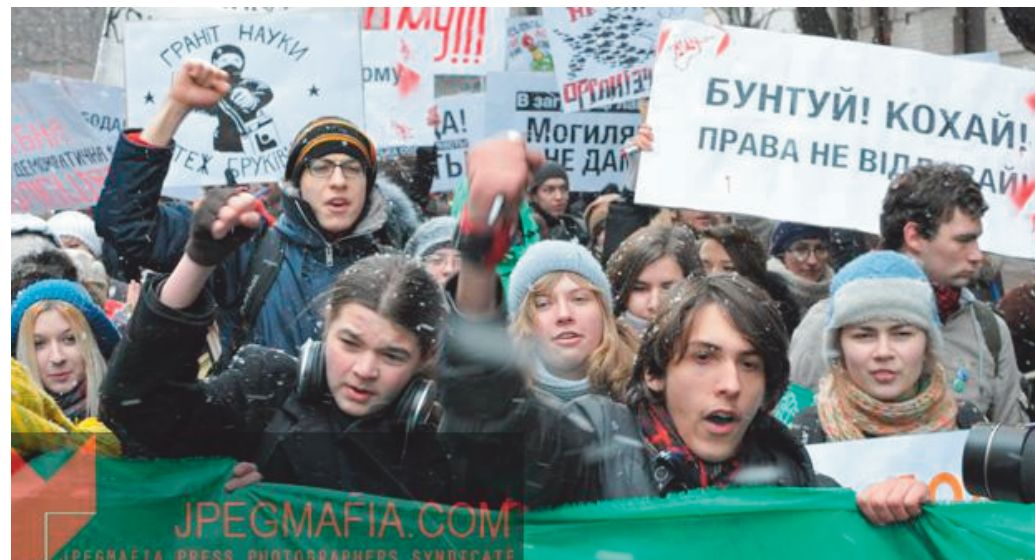
For the past few weeks, thousands of parents, students and educators have been protesting against the proposed closure of 25 public schools in New York City (**U.S.A.**).

On Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>, hundreds walked out en masse from the meeting of the Panel for Educational Policy before it sealed their schools' fates.

On February 2<sup>nd</sup> about 2,000 people took to the streets in Halifax (**Canada**) to protest fees and cuts in public education.

On January 31<sup>st</sup>, thousands of students, in seven cities across the **Ukraine**, held protests against the further commercialisation of education as well as the increasing elimination of universities' autonomy. Protesters are resisting the reduction of public funding for education, the elimination of free education, the introduction of a new law allowing unlimited increases in tuition, and a new system, which rates universities based solely by the numbers of students that study there.

On January 21<sup>st</sup>, about 15,000 students protested in The Hague (**the Netherlands**) against cuts being imposed on education, and student financing. These plans will abolish the study financing for Master students, impose a 3,000€ fine on students, (as well as the university,) if a student delays their graduation by more than 1 year. Furthermore, they are threatening to abolish the right to free public transport for those students. Protesters were confronted with heavy police violence, and were attacked with tear gas, batons and mounted riot police. 28 students were arrested.



## Latest Activities on the ISM

Following a chat meeting, activists in Indonesia, Taiwan and Nepal, among others, decided to call for the **1<sup>st</sup> Asian Regional Meeting** in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. It will be used to initiate a stronger network between groups in Asia that are fighting for free education, and coordinate

protests for the "Spring of Resistance". More details: [http://ism-global.net/arm\\_jakarta](http://ism-global.net/arm_jakarta)

The **ISM-North America (ISM-NA)** was initiated, and now has its own mailing list, as well as a group and page on facebook. More details:

<http://ism-global.net/ism.na> + Contact: [ismna@lists.riseup.net](mailto:ismna@lists.riseup.net)

An **SoR design group** was initiated especially for the "Spring of Resistance" to create leaflets, posters and symbol designs. Want to help as well? More details: [http://ism-global.net/SoR\\_design](http://ism-global.net/SoR_design) + Contact: [ism.graphicx@gmail.com](mailto:ism.graphicx@gmail.com)

Some activists also initiated an **ISM techies group** for people who want to help improving the website. Contact: [ism.techies@gmail.com](mailto:ism.techies@gmail.com)

The "**International Joint Statement**", (which was used as a content basis for the "Global Wave of Action for Education" and is currently being endorsed by 65 groups worldwide) has been revised, but without chan-

ging the core messages; It is not linked to any specific time frame anymore, and will also be used as the content basis for the "Spring of Resistance".

*Consider endorsing it as well:*

*[http://ism-global.net/international\\_joint\\_statement](http://ism-global.net/international_joint_statement)*